

114-005 REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION TO APPLY PHYSICAL AGENT MODALITIES:

In order to apply physical agent modalities, a licensed occupational therapist or licensed occupational therapy assistant must be certified by the Department. Any person who was practicing as (a) an occupational therapist and administering physical agent modalities or (b) an occupational therapy assistant setting up and implementing superficial thermal agent modalities prior to July 16, 2004 may continue to administer the modalities until July 1, 2006. After July 1, 2006, any person who wishes to administer the modalities must obtain certification pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 71-6122. Physical agent modalities may be used by occupational therapy practitioners when used as an adjunct to/or in preparation for purposeful activity to enhance occupational therapy performance. The occupational therapy practitioners must have documented evidence of possessing the theoretical background and technical skills for safe and competent use.

114-005.01 Certification for a Licensed Occupational Therapist to Apply Physical Agent Modalities: A licensed occupational therapist must obtain a certification to apply superficial thermal agent modalities, deep thermal agent modalities, or electrotherapeutic agent modalities, or a combination thereof. The criteria for issuance of a certification to apply physical agent modalities and the documentation required by the Department and the Board are set forth below.

114-005.01A Superficial Thermal Agent Modalities: To obtain a certification to apply superficial thermal agent modalities, a licensed occupational therapist must:

1. Successfully complete a minimum of six hours of Board approved training or its equivalent and pass an end of the course written or computer-based examination approved by the Board which tests competency in the use of superficial thermal agent modalities. The training must include the following:
 - a. Biophysical and biophysiological changes which occur with cryotherapy;
 - b. Indications, contraindications and precautions for the application of cold agents;

- c. Clinical reasoning involved in the application of cold agents;
 - d. Commonly used types of cold agents;
 - e. Application procedures for each cold modality;
 - f. Definition of the term superficial thermal agent;
 - g. Differentiation between the two commonly used methods of heat transfer: conduction and convection;
 - h. The four biophysical effects of heat;
 - i. The physiologic response to tissue secondary to temperature elevation;
 - j. Differentiation between mild, moderate and vigorous dosages of heat;
 - k. Indications, precautions, and contraindications that should be considered when using superficial thermal agents;
 - l. Proper clinical applications for hot packs, paraffin bath, fluidotherapy, whirlpool, and contrast bath;
 - m. Guidelines for educating the client and/or family in the purpose, benefit and potential risk(s) of the modality; and
 - n. Universal precautions, sterile techniques, infection control, and the use of modalities; OR
- 2. Be certified as a hand therapist by the Hand Therapy Certification Commission or other equivalent entity recognized by the Board. Any occupational therapist who bases their certificate on their hand therapist certification will receive certification for all three levels of physical agent modalities; OR
 - 3. Have a minimum of five years of experience in the use of the physical agent modality and pass the examination approved by the Board on the physical agent modality pursuant to 172 NAC 114-005.09; OR
 - 4. Successfully complete education during a basic educational program which includes demonstration of competencies for application of the physical agent modality.

114-005.01B Deep Thermal Agent Modalities: To obtain a certification to apply deep thermal agents, a licensed occupational therapist must:

- 1. Successfully complete a minimum of 12 hours of Board approved training or its equivalent and pass an end of the course written or computer-based examination and a practical examination approved by the Board which tests competency in the use of deep thermal agent modalities. The training must include the following:
 - a. Theory and rationale for the application of therapeutic ultrasound;
 - b. Differentiation between the parameters for therapeutic ultrasound;
 - c. Current research trends in the utilization of ultrasound;
 - d. Clinical decision making in the determination of the appropriate treatment parameters for ultrasound;
 - e. Clinical procedures for the application of ultrasound;

- f. Safe use of ultrasound, contraindications and precautions for treatment ; and
 - g. Methods for maximizing therapeutic effect in the use of phonophoresis as a physical agent modality; OR
- 2. Be certified as a hand therapist by the Hand Therapy Certification Commission or other equivalent entity recognized by the Board. Any occupational therapist who bases their certificate on their hand therapist certification will receive certification for all three levels of physical agent modalities; OR
- 3. Have a minimum of five years of experience in the use of the physical agent modality and pass the examination approved by the Board on the physical agent modality pursuant to 172 NAC 114-005.09; OR
- 4. Successfully complete education during a basic educational program which includes demonstration of competencies for application of the physical agent modality.

114-005.01C Electrotherapeutic Agent Modalities: To obtain a certification to apply electrotherapeutic agent modalities, a licensed occupational therapist must:

- 1. Successfully complete a minimum of 22 hours of Board approved training or its equivalent and pass an end of the course written or computer-based examination and a practical examination approved by the Board which tests competency in the use of electrotherapeutic agent modalities. The training must include the following:
 - a. Available parameters of electrical stimulation devices and the principles and concepts of electricity;
 - b. Physiological effects of electrical stimulation;
 - c. Therapeutic goals of electrical therapy;
 - d. Physiological events associated with electrical stimulation;
 - e. Distinguishing characteristic and indications and contraindications of electrical stimulation;
 - f. Physiological effects of various parameters of electrical stimulation (voltage, type, dosage, duty cycle, etc.);
 - g. Therapeutic relationship of electrotherapy with other therapeutic procedures;
 - h. Clinical application of electrical stimulation in rehabilitation;
 - i. Clinical reasoning process used to determine selection of Neuromuscular Electrical Stimulation (NMES) and appropriate parameters;
 - j. Parameters of therapeutic electrical currents;
 - k. Biophysiological responses to electrical currents;
 - l. Indications and contraindications for NMES use;
 - m. Appropriate electrode placement for treatment protocols;
 - n. Clinical applications for iontophoresis;
 - o. Definition and differentiation of the clinical application of iontophoresis

- from phonophoresis;
 - p. Biophysiology and mechanism related to transdermal delivery of medication;
 - q. Common medications used in iontophoresis and their pharmacology;
 - r. Clinical decision making regarding iontophoresis, indications and precautions;
 - s. The processes in pharmacokinetics: absorption, distribution, and metabolism;
 - t. The processes of pharmacodynamics as it pertains to routine drugs used in phonophoresis and iontophoresis;
 - u. Effects of physical agents, exercise, and manual techniques on pharmacokinetics; and
 - v. The aging process as it relates to pharmacokinetics; OR
2. Be certified as a hand therapist by the Hand Therapy Certification Commission or other equivalent entity recognized by the Board. Any occupational therapist who bases their certificate on their hand therapist certification will receive certification for all three levels of physical agent modalities; OR
 3. Have a minimum of five years of experience in the use of the physical agent modality and pass the examination approved by the Board on the physical agent modality pursuant to 172 NAC 114-005.09; OR
 4. Successfully complete education during a basic educational program which includes demonstration of competencies for application of the physical agent modality.

114-005.01D Physical Agent Modality Certifications: To obtain one or more of the physical agent modality certifications, a licensed occupational therapist must submit the following to the Department:

1. A complete application on a form provided by the Department, a copy of which is attached as Attachment D, and incorporated into these regulations pursuant to 172 NAC 114. At the option of the applicant, s/he may apply by filling out Attachment D or by using an alternate format, which s/he prefers. Only applications which are complete will be considered; and
2. Documentation of:
 - a. A course in superficial, deep or electrotherapeutic physical agent modalities pursuant to 172 NAC 114-005.01A Item 1; 172 NAC 114-005.01B Item 1; or 172 NAC 114-005.01C Item 1; OR
 - b. A certification from the Hand Therapy Certification Commission or other equivalent entity recognized by the Board. Any occupational therapist who bases their certificate on their hand therapist certification will receive certification for all three levels of physical agent modalities; OR
 - c. A passing score of 75% or better on the Nebraska Physical Agent Modalities Testing Service examination for each physical agent Modality

in which certification is being sought; and completion of Attachment D1, a copy of which is attached and incorporated into these regulations pursuant to 172 NAC 114. At the option of the applicant, s/he may apply by filling out Attachment D1 or by using an alternate format which s/he prefers. Only applications which are complete will be considered; OR

- d. Successfully completing education during a basic educational program which includes demonstration of competencies for application of the physical agent modality and completion of Attachment D2, a copy of which is attached and incorporated into these regulations pursuant to 172 NAC 114. At the option of the applicant, s/he may apply by filling out Attachment D2 or by using an alternate format which s/he prefers. Only applications which are complete will be considered;
3. Attestation by the applicant:
 - a. That s/he has not practiced in Nebraska prior to the application for a certificate; or
 - b. To the actual number of days practiced in Nebraska prior to the application for a certificate; and
4. The required fee.
5. The Department will act within 150 days upon all completed applications for certification.
6. Administrative Penalty/Other Action: An individual who practices prior to issuance of a certificate except as pursuant to 172 NAC 114-005, is subject to assessment of an administrative penalty pursuant to 172 NAC 114-014 or such other action as provided in that statutes and regulations governing the certificate.

114-005.02 Certification for a Licensed Occupational Therapy Assistant to Apply Superficial Thermal Agent Modalities: A licensed occupational therapy assistant may only obtain a certification to apply superficial thermal agent modalities. The criteria for issuance of a

certification to apply superficial thermal agents and the documentation required by the Department and the Board are set forth below.

114-005.02A Superficial Thermal Agent Modalities: To obtain a certification to apply superficial thermal agents, a licensed occupational therapy assistant must:

1. Successfully complete a minimum of six hours of Board approved training or its equivalent and pass an end of the course written or computer-based examination approved by the Board which tests competency in the use of superficial thermal agent modalities. The training must include the following:
 - a. Biophysical and biophysiological changes which occur with cryotherapy;
 - b. Indications, contraindications and precautions for the application of cold

agents;

- c. Clinical reasoning involved in the application of cold agents;
 - d. Commonly used types of cold agents;
 - e. Application procedures for each cold modality;
 - f. Definition of the term superficial thermal agent;
 - g. Differentiation between the two commonly used methods of heat transfer: conduction and convection;
 - h. The four biophysical effects of heat;
 - i. The physiologic response to tissue secondary to temperature elevation;
 - j. Differentiation between mild, moderate and vigorous dosages of heat;
 - k. Indications, precautions, and contraindications that should be considered when using superficial thermal agents;
 - l. Proper clinical applications for hot packs, paraffin bath, fluidotherapy, whirlpool, and contrast bath;
 - m. Guidelines for educating the client and/or family in the purpose, benefit and potential risk(s) of the modality; and
 - n. Universal precautions, sterile techniques, infection control, and the use of modalities; OR
- 2. Have a minimum of five years of experience in the use of superficial thermal agent modalities and pass the examination approved by the Board on superficial thermal agent modalities pursuant to 172 NAC 114-005.09; OR
 - 3. Successfully complete education during a basic educational program which includes demonstration of competencies for application of superficial thermal agent modalities.

114-005.02B To obtain superficial thermal agent modality certification, an occupational therapy assistant must submit the following to the Department:

- 1. A complete application on a form provided by the Department, a copy of which is attached as Attachment D, and incorporated into these regulations pursuant to 172 NAC 114. At the option of the applicant, s/he may apply by filling out Attachment D or by using an alternate format, which s/he prefers. Only applications which are complete will be considered;
- 2. Documentation of:
 - a. A course in superficial thermal agent modalities pursuant to NAC 114-005.02A Item 1; OR
 - b. A passing score of 75% or better on the Nebraska Physical Agent Modalities Testing Service Examination titled Superficial Thermal Agents Test and completion of Attachment D1, a copy of which is attached and incorporated into these regulations pursuant to 172 NAC 114. At the option of the applicant, s/he may apply by filling out Attachment D1 or by using an alternate format which s/he prefers. Only applications which are complete will be considered; OR

- c. Successfully completing education during a basic educational program which includes demonstration of competencies for application of the physical agent modality and completion of Attachment D2, a copy of which is attached and incorporated into these regulations pursuant to 172 NAC 114. At the option of the applicant, s/he may apply by filling out Attachment D2 or by using an alternate format which s/he prefers. Only applications which are complete will be considered.
3. Attestation by the applicant:
 - a. That s/he has not practiced in Nebraska prior to the application for a certificate; or
 - b. To the actual number of days practiced in Nebraska prior to the application for a certificate; and
4. The required fee.
5. The Department will act within 150 days upon all completed applications for licensure.
6. Administrative Penalty/Other Action: An individual who practices prior to issuance of a certificate except as pursuant to 172 NAC 114, is subject to assessment of an administrative penalty pursuant to 172 NAC 114-014 or such other action as provided in that statutes and regulations governing the certificate.

114-005.02C The set up and implementation of a superficial thermal agent modality by an occupational therapy assistant must only be done under the onsite supervision of an occupational therapist certified to administer superficial thermal agent modalities.

114-005.02D An occupational therapist must not delegate evaluation, reevaluation, treatment planning, and treatment goals for physical agent modalities to an occupational therapy assistant.

114-005.03 The Department will issue to each person who meets the requirements for a physical agent modality a certificate to administer physical agent modalities.

114-005.04 Each certificate-holder must keep the credential available in the office or place in which s/he practices, and show proof of the credential upon request.

114-005.05 The certification to apply physical agent modalities will not expire.

114-005.06 The Department with the advice of the Board may discipline or deny a certificate for any of the grounds pursuant to 172 NAC 114-008.

114-005.07 Approval of Physical Agent Modality Courses: For a physical agent modality course to be approved by the Board, the course must meet the requirements pursuant to 172 NAC 114-005.01A Item 1, 172 NAC 114-005.01B Item 1, 172 NAC 114-005.01C Item 1 or 172 NAC 114-005.02A Item 1 and the course provider must submit the following:

1. A complete application on a form provided by the Department, a copy of which is attached as Attachment E, and incorporated into these regulations pursuant to 172

NAC 114. At the option of the applicant, s/he may apply by filling out Attachment E or by using an alternate format, which s/he prefers. Only applications which are complete will be considered;

2. A course outline that includes the objectives of the course;
3. An example of the end of course examination;
4. Instructor(s) curriculum vitae;
5. A sample of an official certificate of attendance or transcript
The certificate of attendance must be signed by the provider and the certificate or transcript must contain the following information:
 - a. Name of course;
 - b. Types of modalities that the course covers, i.e. superficial, electrotherapeutic, deep thermal;
 - c. Date of course;
 - d. Provider of course;
 - e. Contact hours completed;
 - f. Name of person attending the course;
 - g. The score received on the end-of-course examination; and
6. A description of the practicum procedures for the deep thermal and electrotherapeutic training, including the tool used to assess the candidate's competency.

114-005.07A The approval of a course provider found to have issued a certificate of course completion to an individual who did not complete a course will be revoked.

114-005.07B Providers must agree that employees of the Department and/or its designees, in an official capacity, may audit classroom course instruction, course materials, instructors' presentations, course records, records of examination, attendance rosters and other aspects of instruction. These auditors will not be hindered, obstructed, delayed, prevented or interfered with while conducting or attempting to conduct an audit. Audits will be conducted with a minimum of disruptions. Providers agree that auditors may attend any Board- approved course offered for the purpose of the audit without paying any fee. Providers grant

the Department and/or its designees the right to audit records at the premises of the provider or at the physical location of the records.

114-005.07C Providers must keep all records of attendance, records of examination, course records and requests for duplicate course completion certificates on file for five years. These records must be available to the Department upon request.

114-005.07D Once approved, a course may not be substantially altered without a new application being submitted to the Board. A substantial alteration is any change that would modify the content or time allocations or would change any of the course topics.

114 005.07E No course may be advertised or otherwise promoted as appropriate for Nebraska physical agent modality certification until it has been approved by the

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NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
REGULATION AND LICENSURE

72 NAC 114

Board. Advertising a course as being offered for physical agent modality certification before approval of the course is grounds for disqualification as a provider.

114-005.07F The Board will semiannually develop and revise the list of approved physical agent modality certification courses, beginning with the effective date of these regulations, and will act within 150 days of all approved course applications.

114-005.07G Approved courses must be open to all licensees.

114-005.08 Certification Examination: Any occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant having a minimum of five years of experience with physical agent modalities must pass the certification examination.

114-005.08A Certification Examination Procedures: The Nebraska Physical Agent Modalities Testing Service examinations will be administered by Physical Agent Modalities Practitioner Credentialing Agency (PAMPCA, LLC), 627 Crofton Park Lane, Franklin TN 37069-6515, (866) 341-4106 or (615) 794-4106. The superficial thermal agents test is the only Examination occupational therapy assistants are eligible to take. To register for an examination, the applicant must register online at www.pampca.org for the Nebraska Physical Agent Modalities Testing Service Examination and select one of the following five testing options:

1. Superficial Thermal Agents Test;
2. Deep Thermal Agents Test;
3. Superficial and Deep Thermal Agents Test;
4. Electrotherapeutic Agents Test; or
5. Comprehensive Physical Agents Modalities Test (includes Superficial, Deep and Electrotherapeutic Agents Tests).

If an applicant fails to attain a passing score of 75%, the applicant will be allowed to take a second test. If an applicant fails to attain a passing score on the second attempt, the applicant will not be eligible to receive the physical agent modality certification based on five year's experience and will need to obtain their certification through a Board approved training course pursuant to 172 NAC 114-005.07, 172 NAC 114.005.01A, 172 NAC 114-005.01B, 172 NAC 114-005.01C, or 172 NAC 114.005.02A.

114.005.08B Examination Results: The applicant will receive a letter from PAMPCA informing them of their examination results upon the completion of one or a combination of one of the Nebraska Physical Agent Modalities Testing Service Examinations.